

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Office of Fire and Aviation
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354

April 2, 1999

In Reply Refer To:
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Director's Office Instruction Memorandum No. 99-003
Expires: 09/30/2000

To: All OF&A Employees

From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation

Subject: Office of Fire and Aviation Policy on Harassment

It is the policy of the Office of Fire and Aviation to prohibit all forms of sexual harassment, to maintain a work environment free of sexual harassment, and to ensure that such conduct by any employee will not be tolerated (Attachment 1). I am equally committed to a policy that ensures harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, age, or sexual orientation will not be tolerated. I want to emphasize that our temporary and seasonal employees are included in this policy as well as permanent employees.

I also want to remind you that the workplace can be anywhere employees work—an office, the fireline, or a field site. Sometimes employees mistakenly think that because they are in a remote location or on an incident they can behave in a manner that would be unacceptable in any other work setting. You must correct this misconception wherever you find it. Additionally, it continues to be the responsibility of managers and supervisors to take immediate positive action when they receive a report of harassment or if they believe some behavior may be construed as harassment.

Harassment in any form is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. We must take every opportunity to reinforce the message that harassment could cost an individual their job, and they could be held personally liable for associated costs.

We ask for your personal commitment and support to convey the message that harassment in any form involving Bureau of Land Management personnel, including seasonal employees and emergency firefighters, will not be tolerated.

If you have questions concerning this policy, please contact Debie Chivers, EEO Manager, at 387-5454.

/s/Lester K. Rosenkrance

1 Attachment

1 - Harassment-Free Workplace Policy (2 pp)

Distribution

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**Bureau of Land Management
National Office of Fire and Aviation**

Harassment-Free Workplace Policy

Policy: It is the policy of the BLM to prohibit harassment in all of its various forms, to maintain a work environment that is free of harassment, and to ensure that such conduct by any BLM employee will not be tolerated.

Our standard is to strive for a work environment where people treat one another with respect. Managers, supervisors, and all employees, as well as our contractors, cooperators and volunteers have the primary responsibility for creating and sustaining this harassment-free environment. All employees, contractor personnel, and visitors must take personal responsibility for maintaining conduct that is professional and supportive of this environment.

Action Required: Managers and supervisors must take immediate action to stop harassment, to protect the people targeted by the harasser, and to take all reasonable steps to ensure that no further harassment or retaliation occurs. Employees who witness harassment should report it to the proper authority.

Locations Covered: The work environment covers any area where employees work or where work-related activities occur, including travel. This includes field sites, government buildings and other facilities such as fitness centers and campgrounds. Also included are vehicles or other conveyances used for travel.

What Harassment Is: Harassment is coercive or repeated, unsolicited and unwelcome verbal comments, gestures or physical contacts and includes retaliation for confronting or reporting harassment. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical conduct: Unwelcome touching, standing too close, looking up and down, inappropriate or threatening staring or glaring, obscene, threatening, or offensive gestures.
- Verbal or written conduct: Inappropriate references to body parts, derogatory or demeaning comments, jokes, or personal questions; sexual innuendoes; offensive remarks about race, gender, religion, age, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, obscene letters or telephone calls; catcalls; whistles, sexually suggestive sounds; loud, aggressive, inappropriate comments or other vocal abuse.
- Visual or symbolic conduct: Display of nude pictures, scantily-clad, or offensively-clad people; display offensive, threatening, demeaning, or derogatory symbols, drawings, cartoons, or other graphics; offensive T-shirts, coffee mugs, bumper stickers, or other articles.

Penalties: Any employee who engages in harassment will face consequences ranging from verbal warnings and letters of reprimand, up to and including termination from employment, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. Managers and supervisors who do not take action when they know or suspect that harassment is occurring will face the same range of consequences. Contractor staff who engage in harassment may be subject to comparable penalties from their employers, and a contractor who fails to enforce this policy may have its contract terminated. Visitors who harass may be removed from any workplace and prevented from returning.

Individuals who believe they are being harassed or retaliated against should exercise any one or more of the following options as soon as possible:

- Tell the harasser to stop the offensive conduct; and/or
- Tell a manager or supervisor about the conduct; and/or
- Contact your EEO Office, EEO Manager, a Special Emphasis Program Manager, EEO Counselor, or any other individual you trust that would take action.
- Contact a Human Resource Officer, if one is available, when you are on an incident.

In addition, you may seek help from your local Employee Assistance Program.